Session 125

Apple Help

Gordon Meyer
Instructional Products Engineer

Agenda

- What is good onscreen help?
- Help Viewer features and demo
- Creating an Apple Help book
- Converting to Apple Help
  - Special announcement!
- Accessing help from your application
- Q&A

Apple's View of Help

- Onscreen Help is part of overall documentation suite
  - The "suite" includes tutorials, manuals, read me, help tags, web site, and the interface of the app
  - Each suite component has a role in the overall goal of learning about a product

Onscreen Help's Role

- A companion to the computer
- A "last resort" for many users
  - Mostly used to resolve impasses
- A springboard back to accomplishing real work

Optimizing Help

- Minimalist approach
  - Focus on real-world tasks
  - Emphasize troubleshooting
  - Acknowledge prior experience
- Exploit the environment
  - Use automations, graphics
  - Make topics easy to find
  - Write for follow-along

Provide Consistency

- Apple Help is tailored specifically for delivering onscreen, graphically-rich, Internet-enabled help systems

Demo

Apple Help Benefits

- Easy to author
  - Standard HTML
  - Off-the-shelf authoring tools
- Easy to implement
  - You provide access, Help Viewer does the rest
  - One Help solution for Mac OS X

Help Viewer Features

- Renders HTML 3.2
- Natively plays QuickTime movies
- Uses Sherlock engine for searching
- Launches AppleScript automations
- Retrieves content from Internet

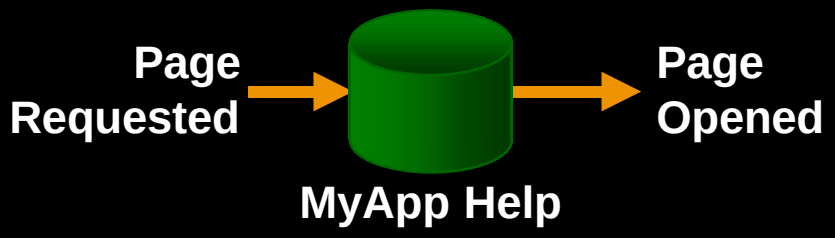
Help Viewer Features

- Help Center displays and searches all help books available to a user
- Help can exist in local or network locations

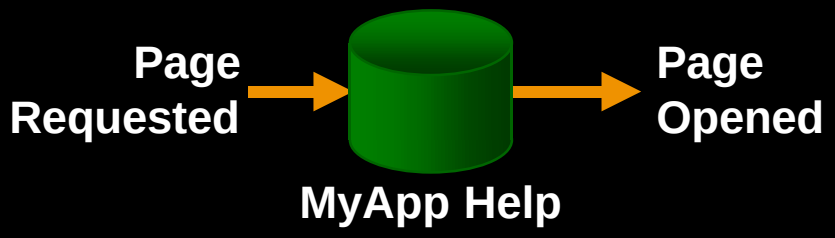
Integrating Internet-based Content

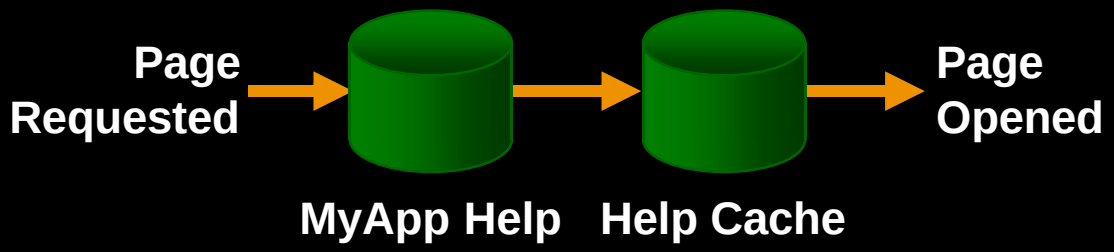
- Help Viewer looks for content locally first, then copies missing files from Internet, if necessary
  - **/myApp Help/page.html**
  - **[current user's Help cache]/myApp Help/page.html**
  - **http://www.yoursite.com/myApp%20Help/page.html**
- Files are cached locally for 3 days

Integrating Internet-based Content

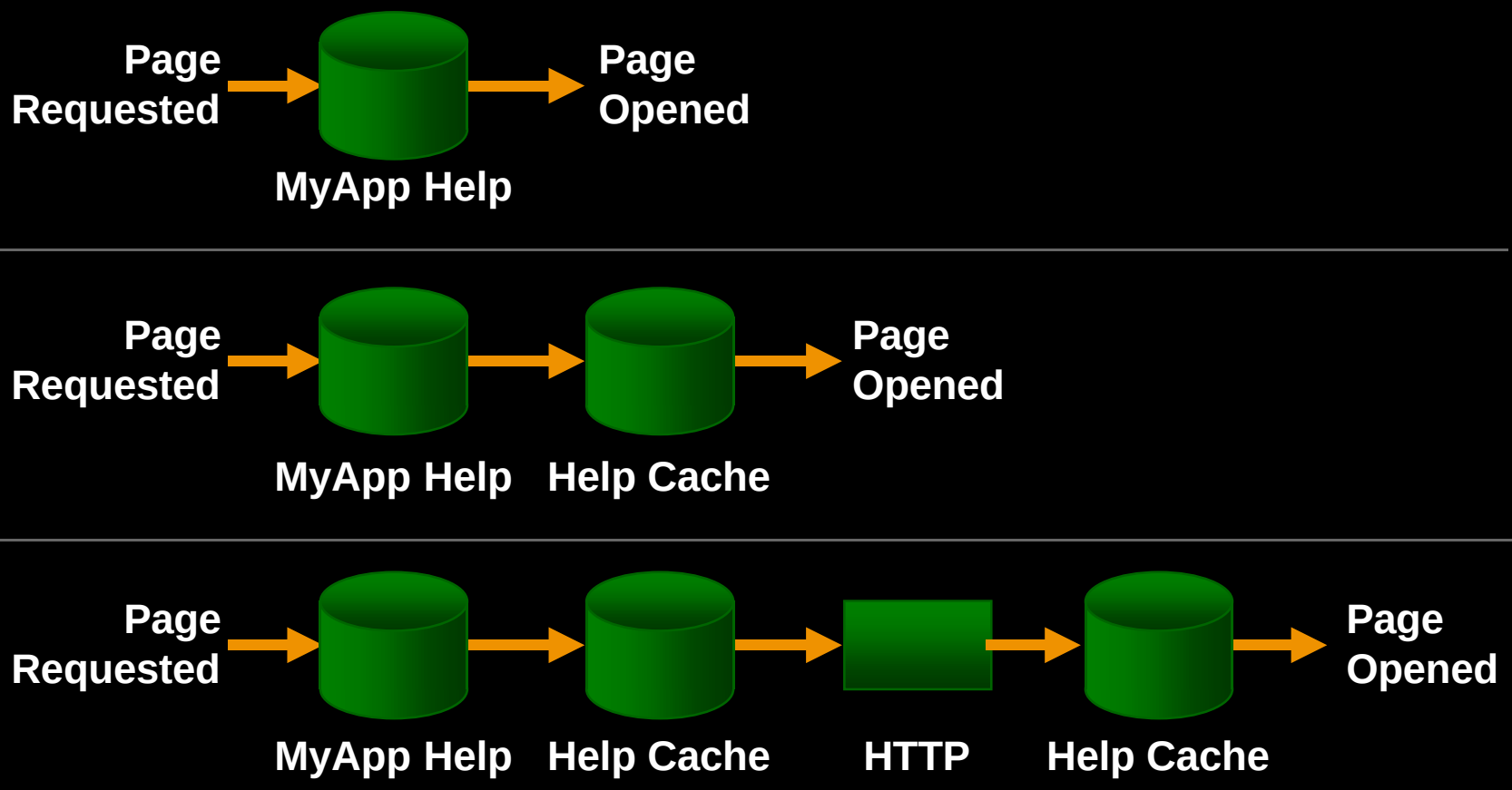


Integrating Internet-based Content





Integrating Internet-based Content



Authoring Apple Help

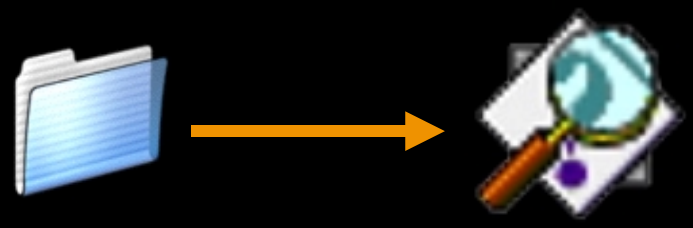
- From HTML to Help in 5 minutes
  - Start with HTML

Authoring Apple Help

```
<HTML>
        <HEAD>
                <META NAME="AppleTitle" CONTENT="MyApp Help">
        </HEAD>
        <BODY>
                <H1> Welcome to MyApp Help!</H1>
        </BODY>
</HTML>
```

- Add one META tag to your start page

Authoring Apple Help



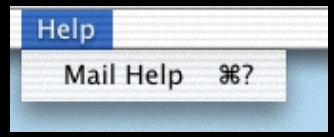
- Make your Help searchable with the Indexing Tool
- Specify a URL for remote content
- Turn on anchor indexing for anchor lookup functionality

Storing Your Help

- Help resides inside your app's bundle
  - Include all localized Help with your other localized resources
  - Provides drag-and-drop install

Providing Access

- From your app's Help menu
- From a Help button
- From the contextual menu



Optimizing Tips

- Additional steps you can take to provide the best user experience

Use AppleScript to Guide Users

- Gets users back to primary interface
- Saves steps and repeated information
- Accomplishes secondary tasks automatically

Improving Search Results

- Use **keyword** meta tag to index words synonyms and misspellings
- Use **robots** meta tag to omit page from search
- Use **AppleAbstract** meta tag to display topic summary with search results

Anchor Lookup

- Provides direct access to pages, or parts of pages
- Use **anchor** tag to provide unique names
- Location of anchor can change without having to revise the calling application

Use Remote Content

- Optimize for downloading
  - Short pages
  - Use local graphics or QuickTime reference movies
- Optimize for searching
  - Limit topics per page
  - Use accurate page titles

Embed Help Commands

- Open to a location
  - Open the help center

```
<A HREF="help:goto_helpcenter=user">Help
  Center</A>
```

  - Switch to another book

```
<A HREF="help:openbook=MyApp%20Help">MyApp
  Help</A>
```

  - Open to an anchor in a book

```
<A HREF="help:anchor=P001
  bookID=MyApp%20Help">Printing</A>
```

Embed Help Commands

- Perform a search

```
<A HREF="help:search='find files'">How do I Find
  Files?</A>

<A HREF="help:search='find files'
  bookID=MyApp%20Help> How do I Find Files
  Using MyApp?</A>
```

- Run an AppleScript

```
<A HREF="help:runscript=MyApp%20Help/script">
        Launch MyApp for me.</A>
```

Converting to Apple Help

- Apple Guide to HTML utility
  - GuideWorks translator
    - ftp://ftp.stairways.com/guideworks-translator.sit
- WinHelp to Apple Help
  - Special announcement!

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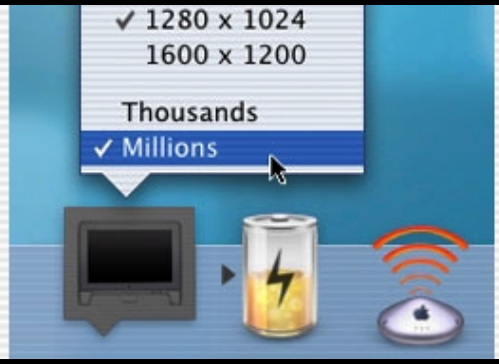
QuickerHelp™



Jack Minsky
President
Software MacKiev

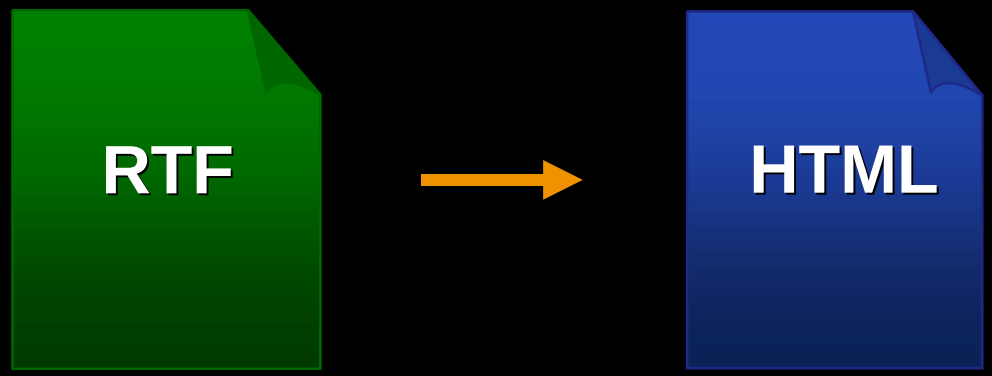
QuickerHelp

Shortens time to create Apple Help from WinHelp

- First developer tool published by Software MacKiev
- Shortens time from a few months to a few days

What Does QuickerHelp Do?

- Converts Windows Help to Apple Help



- Works with both WinHelp and QuickHelp files

Demo

Availability and Pricing

- Shipping next week
- Distribution to be announced
- $595 for SDK (application, manual, tutorial)

Who to Contact

Software MacKiev
Jack Minsky
President
jack@mackiev.com

http://developer.apple.com/events/urls.html

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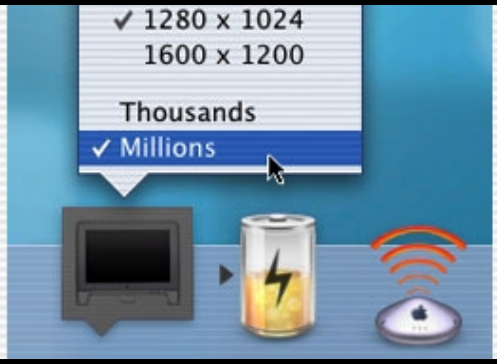
Apple Help



Jessica Kahn
Apple Help Tech Lead

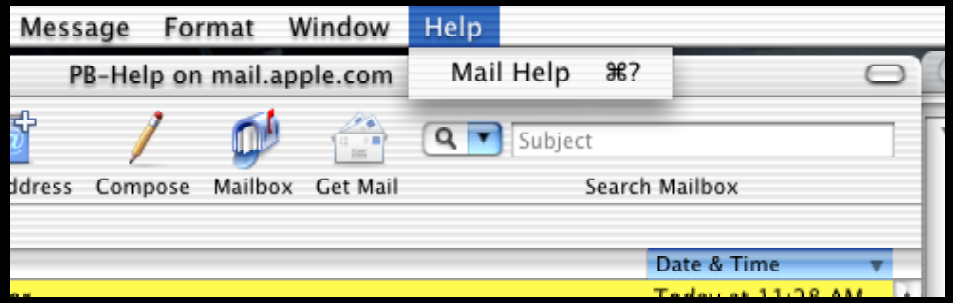
What You've Learned

- What good onscreen help is
- What Help Viewer does
- How to create a help book

Still to Come

- The Help Menu on Mac OS X
- Listing your book in the Help Center
- Accessing help from your application
- Q&A

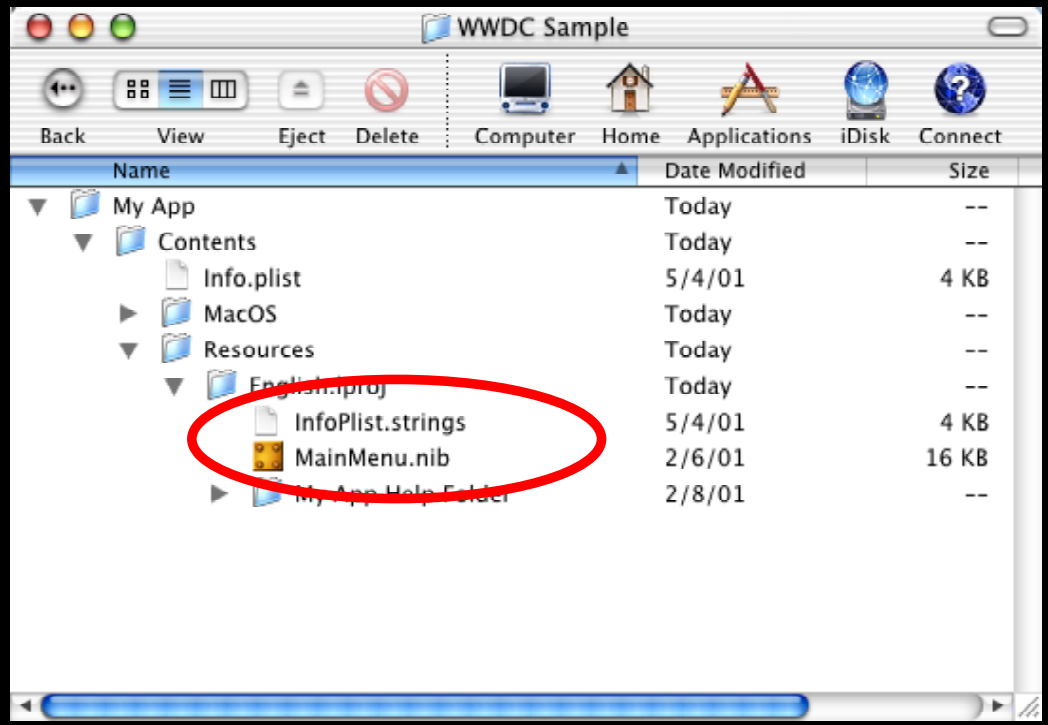
Basic Help Menu



Basic Help Menu

- Bundle your application with its Help
- Define two help keys
  - **CFBundleHelpBookFolder**
  - **CFBundleHelpBookName**
  - In either Info.plist or InfoPlist.strings
- Define **CFBundleIdentifier**
- Define **CFBundleName**

Help Book Folder



Help Book Name

```
<HTML>
  <HEAD>
        <META NAME="AppleTitle" CONTENT="MyApp Help">
  </HEAD>
  <BODY>
        <H1> Welcome to MyApp Help!</H1>
  </BODY>
</HTML>
```

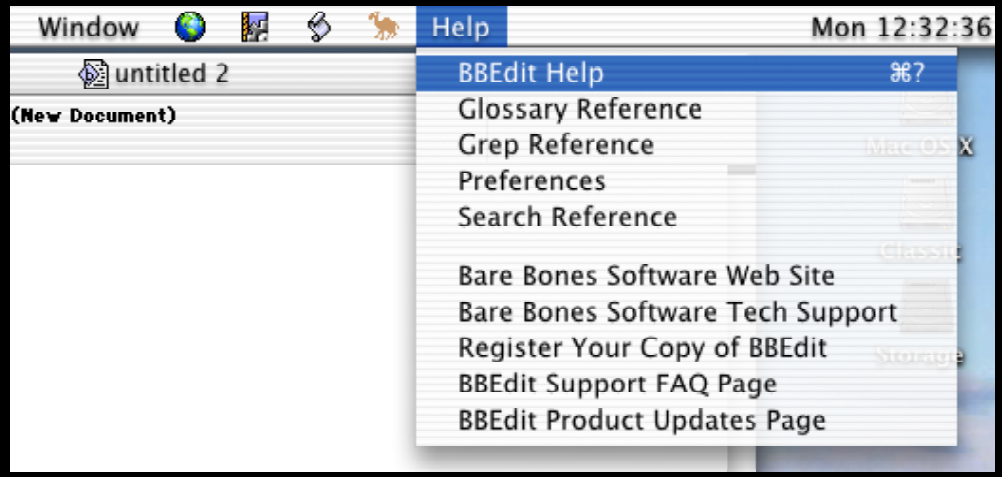
Info.plist

New Sibling | Delete | Dump

Property List	Class	Value
Root	Dictionary	4 key/value pairs
CFBundleHelpBookFolder	String	My App Help Folder
CFBundleHelpBookName	String	My App Help
CFBundleIdentifier	String	com.mycompany.myapp
CFBundleName	String	My App

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<!DOCTYPE plist SYSTEM "file://localhost/System/Library/DTDs/PropertyList.dtd">
<plist version="0.9">
<dict>
	<key>CFBundleHelpBookFolder</key>
	<string>My App Help Folder</string>
	<key>CFBundleHelpBookName</key>
	<string>My App Help</string>
	<key>CFBundleIdentifier</key>
	<string>com.mycompany.myapp</string>
	<key>CFBundleName</key>
	<string>My App</string>
</dict>
</plist>
```

Custom Help Menu



Custom Help Menu

- Define array value for **CFBundleHelpBookFolder**
  - Tells the system “hands off”
- Create your help menu and add items
- Use Apple Help APIs for menu handling

Info.plist

New Sibling | Delete | Dump

Property List	Class	Value
Root	Dictionary	4 key/value pairs
CFBundleHelpBookFolder	Array	1 ordered object
0	String	My App Help Folder
CFBundleHelpBookName	String	My App Help
CFBundleIdentifier	String	com.mycompany.myapp
CFBundleName	String	My App

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<!DOCTYPE plist SYSTEM "file://localhost/System/Library/DTDs/PropertyList.dtd">
<plist version="0.9">
<dict>
    <key>CFBundleHelpBookFolder</key>
    <array>
        <string>My App Help Folder</string>
    </array>
    <key>CFBundleHelpBookName</key>
    <string>My App Help</string>
    <key>CFBundleIdentifier</key>
    <string>com.mycompany.myapp</string>
    <key>CFBundleName</key>
    <string>My App</string>
</dict>
</plist>
```

Help Center

- Register your book to list it in the Help Center
- Enables special features of Help Viewer:
  - Searching
  - Remote content
  - AppleScript execution
  - Access via Apple Help APIs
  - More…

Help Center

- Use **AHRegisterHelpBook**
- Takes an FSRef to a bundle
- Registers all books contained in that bundle
- Also requires special Help list keys
- Cocoa apps with one book get it for “free”

Caveats

- Keep your AppleTitles unique to avoid confusion
- User needs to have launched your application once for your help to appear in the Help Center list

Demo

Apple Help APIs

- Use these to access help content from your application
- Help.framework, part of Carbon umbrella
- C API, usable by Cocoa apps too
- Available in CarbonLib 1.1 and later

Apple Help APIs

- Registering a help book
  - **AHRegisterHelpBook**
- Opening Help Viewer to a location
  - **AHGotoMainTOC**
  - **AHGotoPage**
- Lookups and Searches
  - **AHLookupAnchor**
  - **AHSearch**

Sample Code

OpeningToHelpLocations.c

```
#include <Carbon/Carbon.h>

// Go to the Help Center
AHGotoMainTOC( kAHTOCTypeUser );

// Go to the Developer Help Center
AHGotoMainTOC( kAHTOCTypeDeveloper );

// Go to the main page of your application's help
AHGotoPage( CFSTR("My AppleTitle"), NULL, NULL );

// Go to another page of your application's help
AHGotoPage( CFSTR("My AppleTitle"), CFSTR("pgs/file.htm"), NULL );

// Go to any HTML 3.2 file on disk
AHGotoPage( NULL, CFSTR("file:///path/to/file.htm"), NULL );
```

Sample Code

LookupsAndSearches.c

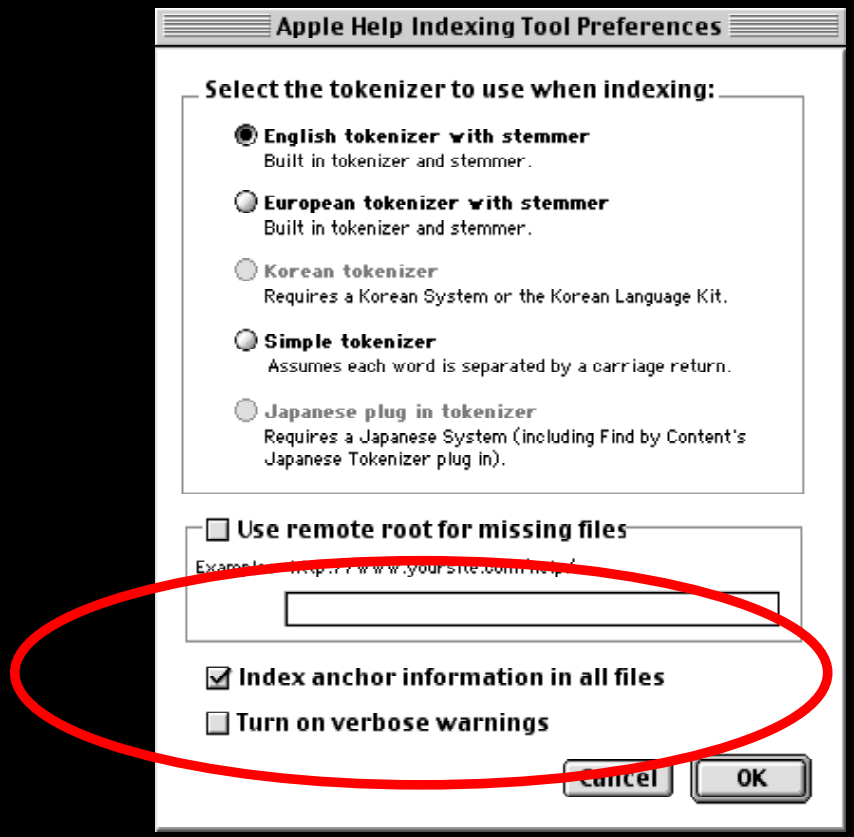
```
#include <Carbon/Carbon.h>

// Perform an anchor lookup
AHLookupAnchor( CFSTR("My AppleTitle"), CFSTR("PrintingAnchor001") );

// Perform a search of the Help Center for the specified term
AHSearch( NULL, CFSTR("How do I find files?") );

// Limit the search to just your help book, if desired
AHSearch( CFSTR("My AppleTitle"), CFSTR("How do I find files?") );
```

LookupsAndSearches.c

```c
#include <Carbon/Carbon.h>

// Perform an anchor lookup
AHLookupAnchor( CFSTR("My AppleTitle"), CFSTR("PrintingAnchor001") );

// Perform a search of the Help Center for the specified term
AHSearch( NULL, CFSTR("How do I find files?") );

// Limit the search to just your help book, if desired
AHSearch( CFSTR("My AppleTitle"), CFSTR("How do I find files?") );
```

Anchor Lookup Details

- Why I like it (and you should too):
  - Your application can be developed independently of its help content
    - Content authors are free to reorganize help content as often as they wish
    - Programmers implement help management once


Apple Help Indexing Tool Preferences
Select the tokenizer to use when indexing:
English tokenizer with stemmer
Built in tokenizer and stemmer.
European tokenizer with stemmer
Built in tokenizer and stemmer.
Korean tokenizer
Requires a Korean System or the Korean Language Kit.
Simple tokenizer
Assumes each word is separated by a carriage return.
Japanese plug in tokenizer
Requires a Japanese System (including Find by Content's Japanese Tokenizer plug in).
Use remote root for missing files
Index anchor information in all files
Turn on verbose warnings
Cancel
OK

More Information

- **http://developer.apple.com/macos/help.html**
  - Apple Help SDK
  - Providing User Assistance with Apple Help documentation
- **http://developer.apple.com/sdk/index.html#Carbon**
  - CarbonLib SDK
    - Help Viewer for CarbonLib, version 1.6.3
    - Newest Help Indexing Tool, version 1.3

Who to Contact

Apple Help Engineering Team
AppleHelpComments@group.apple.com

Apple Help Authoring Discussion List
http://lists.apple.com

Apple Worldwide Developer Relations
John Geleynse
User Experience Technology Mgr.
geleynse@apple.com

http://developer.apple.com/events/urls.html

User Experience Roadmap

702 Interface Builder	Hall 2 **Tues., 3:30pm**
114 Application Packaging & Document Binding	Hall 2 **Wed., 5:00pm**
FF103 Feedback Forum: Aqua	Room J1 **Wed., 3:30pm**
119 Carbon Controls & Appearance I	Hall 2 **Thurs., 9:00am**
120 Carbon Controls & Appearance II	Hall 2 **Thurs., 10:30am**

User Experience Roadmap

127 Speech Recognition & Synthesis In-Depth	Room C **Thurs., 10:30am**
130 Designing & Using Aqua Icons	Hall 2 **Fri., 10:30am**
FF114 Feedback Forum: High Level Toolbox	Room C **Fri., 3:30pm**

Q&A

John Geleynse
User Experience Technology Manager
geleynse@apple.com

http://developer.apple.com/events/urls.html

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